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ABSTRACT

This document reports on the nature of Australian beginning teachers' entry into the teaching profession and examines, among other questions: (1) procedures adopted to ease teachers into employment; (2) sources of information concerning their new teaching situations; (3) planned induction activities and their value; (4) matters of teacher concern; (5) satisfaction with first-year activities; and (6) relationships between patterns of entry and teacher concerns. Descriptive information was collected nationwide from a sample of 1977 beginning teachers (about 15,000 in number) and their principals concerning: (1) entry into the classroom; (2) entry into the community; and (3) entry into the school environment. Interpretation of the data is presented against a background of activities new teachers might meet with presented on the systems (state and district) level and school level (including interviews, printed material, conferences, school visits, and consultation). Summaries are presented of information on (1) general background information on beginning teachers, (2) the degree to which beginning teachers' stated preferences for teaching locale are satisfied and the amount and type of aid they received in entering those locales, and (3) general satisfaction with jobs and degree of acceptance by other members of the school teaching community. Implications are discussed concerning the satisfaction one should take from the induction preparation teachers presently receive and the challenges remaining to assure that all beginning teachers are adequately prepared for their first teaching positions. (MJB)

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The Induction of Beginning Teachers in Australia.

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This document describes aspects of The Teacher Induction Project, sponsored by the Education Research and Development Committee.

1978.

1. Introduction

For over a decade in Australia, as elsewhere, there has been an increasing concern with the professional development of teachers and, in particular, with the development and professional socialisation of the beginning teacher. But up to the present, in this country, there has been little sophisticated study of what happens to newly qualified teachers as they leave the institutions where they have engaged in pre-service preparation and take up their first teaching appointments. What it is like to be a teacher in Australian Government schools has been well documented (Campbell, 1975), and so have the concerns experienced by beginning teachers. Representatives from tertiary institutions (c.f. Gasson et al, 1977; Scriven & Shaw, 1977), teacher associations and schools (Mitchell & Chisholm, 1977) and employing authorities (Anderton, 1976) have carried out small and large scale surveys. Essentially their findings are congruent with those of overseas researchers (c.f. Coates and Thorensen, 1976) in that they highlight similar factors which are associated with the over-whelming magnitude of the job of teaching and the working relationships among teachers and between teachers and pupils.

Concurrently with the increase in documentation on beginning teachers' concerns, some schools have become increasingly critical of pre-service institutions. It is maintained that, more so than in the past, they are not adequately equipping teachers to cope with the realities of their job. Whether this is actually the case, or whether the difficulties experienced by some new teachers are a function of the mode of entry into the profession is a moot point. Certainly, compared to many other forms of work, entry to teaching differs markedly. Overall, there appears to be no eased entry such as occurs in an apprenticeship, nor does there appear to be a sharing of entry experiences with more mature, longer-serving colleagues. From being students responsible only to themselves for their own learning, almost overnight beginning teachers become fully responsible for the instruction of their pupils from the first working day: in fact, an expectation seems to be that they should perform the same tasks as the 25-year veterans (Lortie, 1975). But, whatever the explanation, a disenchantment with pre-service education coupled with a mounting awareness of the beginning teachers' concerns have led some schools and regional educational authorities to mount programmes and issue handouts to help ease their new teachers into the profession. The purposes implied by these are probably like those identified by Eraut (1972), namely:

(i) to extend the teachers' knowledge about the school and the education system, and how both function;

(ii) to increase the teachers' awareness and comprehension of the complexities of teaching situations and to suggest alternative ways of coping with these complexities;

(iii) to acquaint the teachers with support services and resources within the school and the region, and

(iv) to help the teachers, generally through counselling activities, to apply knowledge they already possess or could obtain for themselves to the daily tasks or problems which confront them.

There are at least two implicit assumptions underlying these activities. The first is that the various ad hoc measures will effectively induct the new teachers into the teaching service and simultaneously accelerate the process of professional socialisation. The second, which is not mutually exclusive from the first, is that the schools, and the practitioners in them, are better able than others to show new teachers what are the appropriate skills, attitudes and values for a teacher to possess. Now, whereas it is clear that those in schools have an important perspective to present to new teachers and, for that matter, to teachers in training, the last mentioned assumption is based on the debatable view that the process of teacher education (and presumably induction practices) must fit teachers to schools. If this view is accepted the process of teacher socialisation (which includes induction) consequently must be seen as having finite products - persons fully matured and capable of taking their places in schools. Concomitantly, individuals must be portrayed as relatively passive entities yielding to socialising pressures. This is clearly not the case. They can, in fact, be creative forces and certainly they possess a considerable potential to shape the milieu in which they work. This potential has in numerous cases yet to be realised by many who accept schools and society as givens.

Any explanation of the professional socialisation of teachers must take into account that individuals can be creative, as well as being subject to constraining social forces. This point of view is argued cogently by Lacey (1977) who considers the socialisation of teachers as a complex, interactive, negotiated and provisional process.

2. Aims and Research Questions

The overarching objective of the research was to document as fully as possible the nature of beginning teachers' entries into the profession, gathering data on what happens to newly qualified teachers as they leave their pre-service institutions and take up their first teaching appointments. To guide data collection several subsidiary questions were generated. For example,

* What procedures are adopted to ease beginning teachers into employment?

* Do they receive help to learn about their job, their first school, and its clientele?
* What planned induction activities do they experience?
* Which ones do they consider particularly helpful?
* What matters are a worry to them early, and again later in their first year? What matters do they manage adequately?
* Do they feel accepted in their schools?
* Are they satisfied with aspects of their first year of teaching?
* Are there any relationships between different patterns of entry to employment, school, local community and classroom and the different concerns, expectations and satisfactions of beginning teachers early and also later in their first year of teaching?

Some of the preceding questions are similar to those asked by Taylor and Dale (1971) in their U.K. survey of beginning teachers. This project is indebted to their pioneer work and to the detailed reports on induction in the U.K. by Bolam (1973) and Bolam and Baker (1975). However, this Australian study differs from its U.K. counterparts in a number of distinctive ways including questionnaire construction, sampling procedures, and data analysis. It is also distinctly different from the U.S.A. Beginning Teacher Evaluation Study (BTES) which has been reported by Berliner and Tikunoff (1976), McDonald (1976) and McDonald and Elias (1976). Whereas, for example, the present project centres on teachers as they enter the various phases of their first teaching position, the focus to date in the second phase of the BTES has been on the classroom as a setting for achievements in reading and mathematics and seems, furthermore, not to be strictly limited to beginning teachers.

As the data analysis is incomplete at the time of writing, by no means all of the research questions can be addressed in this report.

3. Methodology including Data Collection.

(a) Stages in the project

This national undertaking could not have proceeded without the co-operation of all educational authorities in Australia, and that of the Education Research and Development Committee (ERDC). Their support is gratefully acknowledged. In conjunction with the ERDC, a liaison committee consisting of representatives of the educational authorities together with the project team was formed prior to launching the study. Also co-operative

links were established with the Commonwealth Teaching Service which was surveying new teachers in the Australian Capital Territory and in the Northern Territory, with the Curriculum and Research Branch in Western Australia where there was a study of new primary teachers and with the South Australian Education Department which, at specific times, released a senior employee to co-operate with the project team. From these beginnings the project proceeded through several distinct stages.

First stage objectives were to gather as much descriptive information as possible from the various education authorities about induction practices of which they were aware, to survey the literature on teacher induction and the professional socialisation of teachers, and to plan for Stage II. The objective of the second stage was to obtain more comprehensive information on induction practices. During 1977 questionnaires were completed by beginning teachers and their principals in the early months of the year, interviews were conducted in all Australian states and territories in mid-year, and a second questionnaire was sent to beginning teachers in the latter months of the year. Data from these questionnaires and interviews, further details of which appear below, would help answer the research questions posed earlier.

The descriptive account of planned induction activities, which provides a background to this report, appeared in an earlier document (Fyfield, Taylor and Tisher, 1977) and is reproduced in a somewhat condensed form in a subsequent section.

(b) The questionnaires for beginning teachers and their principals.

In order to gain a picture of the beginning teachers' entry to teaching and of their experiences, expectations, satisfactions and concerns during their transition from teacher education to being fully-fledged teachers in the 'arena of the classroom', a simple conceptualisation was adopted to guide questionnaire compilation and item writing.

At the completion of their pre-service education all prospective teachers possess a cluster of entry characteristics, various types of skills, expectations, attitudes, attributes and knowledge, that they hope will be relevant to their anticipated performance as teachers. These contribute to what Lacey (1977) calls a 'latent culture' that could be activated in the new situations they enter. They can then be thought of as carrying these characteristics with them as they traverse a series of boundaries until eventually they arrive at the hub - 'the arena of the classroom' - where most of their successes and disappointments will be experienced. The quality of their induction into teaching can be gauged by the manner in which they are eased across the various boundaries as well as by the satisfactions and help they experience. Crossing the first boundary involves moving from the pre-service institution into the area of influence of an employing

authority, be it a state Education Department or a non-government school. It is useful to know, as they traverse this boundary, whether they receive information about prospective schools and employment conditions, how they are notified that they are acceptable applicants, what procedures are followed to ease them into their first school and whether their first appointment matches their expectations.

The second and third boundaries are not necessarily traversed in strict sequence, but it is useful to conceptualize them as separate and distinct. Beginning teachers have to move into another community, often unknown and at great distances from established friends. To be eased across the second boundary into the new community implies receiving help with accommodation, and offers of information about the community, its expectations and its facilities. The third significant boundary is traversed on entering the school and in learning about its characteristics, expectations and resources. At some point between moving across the first boundary and crossing the fourth and final one into the arena of the classroom, beginning teachers will be allocated professional tasks and their reactions to this are useful indicators on their professional socialisation. Then as they move across the last boundary the extent to which they are eased across can be gauged by help given with programming tasks, information about resource materials, and advice and counselling with respect to classroom procedures.

The first beginning teachers' questionnaire, two pages of which are reproduced in Tables 1 and 2, contains items relating to the traversing of each of the boundaries mentioned and provides a space in which the new teachers could make further comments they thought would be helpful to the inquiry. The last section of the principals' questionnaire, relating to the school and the classroom, is identical with the last section of the beginning teachers' one so that congruences and dissonances between the two can be assessed. The first section gathered more specific information about planned induction activities in the school or the region than would be known to beginning teachers in their first few months teaching.

The second questionnaire to beginning teachers was intended to discover the extent to which they were coping with the arena of the classroom towards the end of their first year, their feelings of satisfaction with teaching at this time, the help they had received with their professional development throughout the year and what help they believed, in the light of their experiences, should be given to future teachers taking up their first appointment. This questionnaire consequently contains a section identical to that in the first questionnaire on the school and classroom matters, as well as items designed to assess their satisfactions and another

TABLE 1.

A sample page from the first Teachers' Questionnaire

For Office Use

51 How satisfactory is your accommodation?

Very satisfactory	
Satisfactory	
Unsatisfactory	
Very unsatisfactory	

52 Have you made adequate arrangements for transport between your school and your accommodation?

Yes	
No	

On the first official day of your appointment please indicate whether -

	All day	Part of day	Not at all
53 A staff conference was held			
54 Students were at school			
55 You were left in charge of students			

56 Was your work load defined on (or before) day one?

Yes	
No	

57 If 'no', how many days after day one was it before you knew your firm allocation of work?

1 day	
2-5 days	
6-10 days	
11-15 days	
over 15 days	

58 Were you given any help with your teaching during the first week?

Yes	
No	

59 If 'no', were you particularly worried by this?

Yes	
No	

TABLE 2

A sample page from the first Teachers' Questionnaire

For Office Use

In the two lists below please indicate for each item whether you manage it adequately and whether it troubles you.

TASKS	Manage adequately		Is a worry		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Devising schemes of work					25
Organising lesson content					26
Discovering level at which to teach					27
Assessing students' work					28
Recording students' progress					29
Evaluating own teaching					30
Discovering the standard of personal behaviour expected of you by the school					31
					32
Performing form teacher duties					33
Performing yard duties					34
Motivating pupils					35
Controlling classes					36
Using audio visual aids					37
Teaching specific skills e.g. reading					38
					39
Teaching groups with wide ability range					40
					41
Teaching slow learners					
Teaching immigrants					
Others - please specify					

COMMUNICATING	Manage adequately		Is a worry		
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
with administrators					42
with parents of pupils					43
with Principal or Deputy Principal					44
with other colleagues					45
with pupils					46
with others - please specify					47

set relating to induction practices. The design of the section relating to satisfactions of teaching was influenced by the writings of Lawler (1973).

This paper discusses only results derived from the data of the first teachers' questionnaire and so must be regarded as a preliminary survey only.

(c) The population and the survey sample

For this project the target population of new teachers was defined by two parameters. It was restricted to teachers who (i) completed their pre-service teacher education in 1976, and (ii) took up their first teaching appointment in 1977. An estimate of the beginning teachers, so defined, totalled about 15,000, and in view of physical, financial and time constraints it was necessary to take a sample* of this population.

Owing to a variety of factors, e.g. movement of staff and closures of small schools, it was impossible to obtain up-to-the-minute information from all the various education authorities on the number and location of beginning teachers in their service as well as the names and addresses of every single school in the nation. Hence the procedures outlined below were adopted to ensure that for each state and territory each beginning teacher had an equal chance of being selected.

Whereas the aim of the project was to gather and analyse information representative for Australia as a whole it was recognised that individual states and territorial authorities might wish to examine representative information for their own region and compare it with the Australian data, interpreting it in the light of special local historical, political, economic and educational factors. To ensure this could be done validly it was determined to aim for a sample size of 300 in the larger states and, in a state or territory where the number of beginning teachers was less than this figure, a sample equivalent to the entire population. From general advice received from authorities regarding approximate estimates of beginning teachers in their primary and secondary divisions it was estimated that approximately 300 schools would have to be sampled in the larger states using the most up-to-date school lists available. The plan followed was to contact each principal in the schools sampled, obtain the names of their beginning teachers, and forward the first questionnaire plus a covering letter soliciting their help to each beginning teacher so identified. All principals (or their nominees) in schools with beginning teachers were also asked to complete the principals' questionnaire. Contact with principals and teachers was by mail and in every case reply paid envelopes were provided to facilitate return of materials. The whole process was repeated for the administration of the second beginning teachers' questionnaire in October, 1977, but care had to be taken with covering letters to principals

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* Advice on the sampling design was received from the Australian Council for Educational Research.

since there were overlaps between the second and first samples. As the principals' response rate to the request to supply beginning teachers' names was higher for the second sampling (95 per cent compared to 89 per cent for the first), information from these second returns was used to derive more accurate estimates of beginning teachers in each state and territory. These revised estimates were used to calculate weights to be attached to the respective responses from the states and territories. Column 5 in Table 3 contains the estimates for the eight sub-populations for the project.

Table 3 also contains details on the numbers of schools in the most up-to-date lists supplied by education authorities (at February 1977), the proportion and number selected for the systematic sample, the number of beginning teachers who were contacted and who completed the questionnaire, and the proportions this last group are of the target populations. The response rate from beginning teachers after a follow-up contact became 64 per cent, and overall 11 per cent of Australia's beginning teachers completed the questionnaire.

As a check on the interpretation of the data from the questionnaires and to give the project team further insights into the experiences and perceptions of beginning teachers in remote centres, rural areas, inner city industrial regions, coastal centres, and regions with and without sophisticated induction programmes, over 200 selected beginning teachers were interviewed, individually or in groups, in all Australian States and Territories. They were drawn from government and non-government, primary and post-primary schools. Generally all interviews were tape-recorded and then their essence summarised on a series of coloured cards for easy reference. There was no rigid format to the interviews but a definite effort was made to touch upon similar matters in each one. A schedule, which was to be used flexibly, was developed as a guide by the project team. Information from the interviews is incorporated throughout the discussions on the findings.

4. An overview of Induction Practices in Australia

Before the data from the first teachers' questionnaire are analysed and discussed it is appropriate to set them in context by providing a brief overview of some of the induction practices new teachers might experience.

The administrative pattern in Australian education, where the majority of new teachers enter one of the geographically extensive state or territory government systems, is complex. Government schools (the majority) are administered under six separate State education departments and two

TABLE 3.

Administration of First Teachers' Questionnaire: Details on schools, target populations and sample sizes.

State or Territory	Schools			Beginning Teachers			
	Total Number	Proportion Selected for Sample	Number in Sample	Target Population (Estimate)	Sample Size	Number Completing Questionnaire	Percentage of Target Population
A.C.T.	102	All	102	149	126	82	55
N.S.W.	2919	1 in 10	284	5214	350	239	5
Vic.	2742	1 in 9	306	4217	476	286	7
Q'ld	1471	1 in 5	296	1651	269	168	10
S.A.	843	1 in 3	287	1473	423	276	19
W.A.	800	1 in 3	265	1401	424	268	19
Tas.	290	All	290	400	376	238	60
N.T.	107	All	107	135	110	67	50
Aust.	9274	-	1937	14640	2554	1624	11

Note: Beginning teachers' response rate = 64%

Territory authorities: within these there is a clear separation of primary, secondary and, in one case, technical divisions. To cater more adequately for localised needs and to reduce the high degree of centralisation of authority in the capital cities most government systems have introduced a moderate degree of regionalisation by creating regional educational offices. In addition to the government systems, there are a well-developed Catholic system of schooling and a large number of non-systematic independent schools, both Catholic and non-Catholic. This complexity is to be found in a country which, though it equals the United States in area, has only one sixteenth of its population. Furthermore, some State education departments though only responsible for a staff and pupil population comparable in number to staff and pupils in the Chicago education district are spread over many times the size. It is difficult therefore to make brief general statements about educational practices in Australia, but, at the risk of over-simplification, an attempt will be made to indicate some of the flavour of existing procedures set up to assist people entering the profession and taking up their first teaching appointment.

The following details are part of the information gleaned from education authorities at State and regional levels and from schools and teachers' centres. The procedures which are described are by no means prevalent across the nation, or for that matter throughout any one State or Territory. Our overall impression is that in Australia the approach to the induction of teachers is a little cavalier and based too little on sound knowledge.

For convenience the descriptions of planned induction procedures are grouped under the two major categories of system and school-based activities. Within each of these the various activities are listed in an hierarchical fashion according to the criteria established elsewhere (Fyfield, Taylor and Tisher, 1978.)

(A) System-Based Activities

(a) Appointment procedures

At a systems level appointment procedures constitute an important part of the beginning teachers' induction into the service. Their nature will affect the extent to which new teachers are eased into the profession. More and more education authorities, especially the state ones, are beginning to interview the majority of their new applicants. In the case of the state authorities the interviews are used to provide beginning teachers with some details of the schools, the regions in which they are located, and general employment conditions. Once an application for appointment is accepted appointees are generally notified by letter, and for government positions, beginning teachers can be dispatched to any of the

schools in the State.

(b) Issue of Printed Materials

In the event of a teacher being employed by a State Education Department contact with his employers is often brief. Probably for this reason some employing authorities rely on printed materials to help new teachers bridge the gap between professional training and taking up a particular teaching position. In some states there are brochures describing how to apply for an appointment, salary scales, registration requirements and availability of housing in country areas. Some states produce "profiles" of their schools, and others booklets which include some of the preceding features plus information on such matters as leave, legal position of teachers and retirement funds. Generally the only brochures available from non-government schools are those geared to the needs of prospective parents rather than teachers.

(c) Conferences before and after taking up duty

These are neither widespread nor always well-attended. In fact, those occurring before a teacher takes up duty are almost non-existent. Others during the year are usually planned on a regional basis. In those few situations where senior personnel in the schools have not only encouraged new staff to attend but have planned ahead and hired replacement staff for the period of the new teacher's absence, the conferences have been well received, particularly as a 'rounding-off' for pre-service courses. Usually these conferences are residential and last for three or four days.

(d) Regional meetings

Half-day or one-day meetings held early in the first year occur in all states and territories. They appear to have a therapeutic effect since, among other things, they give an opportunity for beginning teachers from different schools to share their experiences. The meetings take various forms including lectures, round table discussions, and workshops on issues of practical concern to teachers.

(e) Visits to other schools

Several authorities permit and encourage visits to neighbouring schools to allow beginning teachers to meet with more experienced colleagues to discuss such matters as programming, resources, methods of teaching and assessment procedures. Arrangements for the visit are made through the beginning teacher's own school.

(f) Use of consultants

All education systems employ consultants to assist teachers: they are considered essential for professional development.

In reality a beginning teacher is rarely visited more than once in the year and the help and advice given, though valuable, are minimal. The problem is more acute in the larger regions and in remote areas.

(g) Miscellaneous activities

While strictly not an activity in the same sense as the preceding ones the reduction of the new teachers' work load deserves a mention. Several states and territories reduce beginning teachers' class contact time to 0.8 of what it will be in their second year in the hope that this will help ease them into the profession.

(B) School-Based Activities

(a) Issue of printed materials

Because there is so much to be known about a school, some schools provide booklets or brochures for the benefit of all staff. Some are comprehensive, others consist merely of single pages on topics such as aims, discipline, excursions and assessment.

(b) Meetings before and after the school year starts

In all schools staff meet together from time to time to discuss and receive information about a host of essential issues. Generally there is little time for detailed specialist treatment for beginning teachers although what occurs does affect them. In some states that arrange for school staff to attend one or two days before pupils arrive, time is usually set aside for the new teachers to meet the principal or other senior person, and to acquaint them with school lay-out, policy and practices.

(c) Visits

In some instances schools (and education authorities) encourage visits prior to taking up duty. It is maintained that these visits to the school help reduce the new teachers' anxieties of entering an unfamiliar environment. Once in their school beginning teachers rarely have the valuable opportunity for inter-class visits. Only in open-plan schools do they seem to have an opportunity to observe and be observed naturally and unobtrusively, thus paving the way for the subsequent sharing of ideas and analysis of teaching procedures with more experienced colleagues.

(d) Use of consultants

In a number of schools in several states there are persons designated to play a role in the professional development of teachers, especially new ones. Where a formal arrangement for consultation is established it is usually the deputy principals (especially so in secondary schools) who set aside regular times to meet and talk with beginning teachers, to discover how they are progressing, to answer queries, to analyse critical incidents, to review school procedures, and to discuss teaching strategies. The effectiveness of this counselling is of course dependent on the inter-personal skills of the counsellor.

In passing it is appropriate to note that there are no concerted

efforts on the part of the tertiary institutions involved in pre-service education and the recently established teachers' centres to arrange programmes especially for beginning teachers. The rare exceptions stand out as significant. There is, for example, the unique example of one university lecturer who receives travel funds from an education department and time release from his university to visit his exit students in remote areas as a consultant and team teacher.

This account, presented in greater detail in the first Teacher Induction Project report (Fyfield, Taylor and Tisher, 1977) serves to highlight the variety, though not the prevalence, of planned induction activities here and there. It provides the background for the findings reported in the subsequent sections.

5. Analyses and Discussion of the Data

Although, at the time of writing, the data from all questionnaires had been coded and transferred to computer files, the only analyses available dealt with the responses to the first beginning teachers' questionnaire which was completed early in the first school term (i.e. February to May) 1977. This paper deals with a number of these.

(a) Australia's beginning teachers: general background information.

As might be expected the majority (89%) of beginning teachers enter the employ of one of the state or territorial education authorities: 11 percent take appointments in non-government schools (Table 4.1). The greatest number (51%) are appointed to teach in the primary schools, a small proportion (6%) enter schools offering both primary and post-primary education while the remainder (42%) enter one of the nation's secondary schools (Table 4.1). Of the new cohort nineteen percent spent a year or more away from formal studies before they commenced their professional training. The majority of that group (87%) had some form of paid employment and approximately equal proportions (25%) travelled or were involved in home duties. Of all new teachers some (53 percent, in fact) had a legal commitment to teach since they were bonded to an education authority.

Overall, more than three quarters of the nation's beginning teachers received their professional education in one of the many Colleges of Advanced Education (C.A.E.) (Table 4.2), and the majority of these entered primary schools. The greater proportion of those who attended universities were appointed to post-primary schools. However, as Table 4.2 shows, the Colleges of Advanced Education provide the professional education for the majority of the nation's new primary and post-primary teachers who have spent a significant proportion of their teacher education programme in schools (Table 4.3). Sixty-two percent of all beginning teachers spent twelve or more weeks practice teaching and over one third of these were there for more than twenty weeks. Note, however, that of those who had more than twelve weeks practice, two out of every three were primary teachers. Whereas the quality of this school experience cannot be gauged, the

TABLE 4

Australia's Beginning Teachers: Background Information

(N = 14,460)

4.1 Percentage Appointed to Various Levels versus Employing Authority

		Employing Authority		
		Government	Non-Government	
Teaching Level	Primary	43.9	7.2	51.1
	Post-Primary	40.0	2.4	42.4
	Both Primary & Post-Primary	5.3	1.2	6.5
		89.2	10.8	100.0

4.2 Percentage Appointed to Various Levels versus Training Institutes

		Teacher Training undertaken in a		
		University	College of Advanced Education	
Teaching Level	Primary	3.8	47.3	51.1
	Post-Primary	17.2	25.2	42.4
	Both Primary & Post-Primary	1.4	5.1	6.5
		22.4	77.6	100.0

4.3 Organization and Length of Teaching Practice

Practice Organization	% Teachers Involved	Length of Practice	% Teachers Involved
1. 1 day per week	2.1	Nil	0.3
2. Blocks of 1 to 2 weeks	7.7	up to 3 weeks	0.2
3. Blocks of 3 to 6 weeks	57.1	4 to 7 weeks	12.7
4. Whole school term	1.7	8 to 10 weeks	25.1
5. Combination of 1 and 2	4.9	12 to 15 weeks	14.3
6. Combination of 1 and 3	9.6	16 to 19 weeks	22.5
7. Combination of 1 and 4	0.3	over 20 weeks	24.9
8. Other combinations	16.7		
	100.0		100.0

reactions of the teachers to it and the manner of scheduling can. For example, 42 percent of the beginning teachers believe its length should be increased and ten percent its quality. Also, as Table 4.3 shows, the school practice periods (generally) were scheduled in blocks of two or more weeks at a time. In fact, 57 percent of the teachers undertook their practice in blocks of three to six weeks (see Table 4.3). This is about the same proportion who indicated that the professional and general education components of their course were presented concurrently.

(b) Entering the profession

New teachers entering the state and territory systems and certain Catholic school systems undertake to serve in any one of the authority's schools, whereas for independent schools new applicants can expect to teach in the particular school to which they apply. The various state, territory and Catholic school authorities do invite applicants to specify preferences for teaching positions but the final assignment to a school for most of the nation's new teachers is done by a senior officer in a head office in one of the capital cities. According to the present survey 82% of beginning teachers throughout Australia believed they were able to exercise a preference, and for a quarter of these their preference failed to be met "more or less satisfactorily".

TABLE 5.

Participation in Activities

Nature of Activity	% Beginning Teachers
School Visits prior to Term 1.	69
Staff Meeting-Conference	87
Special Professional Activity for New Teachers	41

The significance of the opportunity offered to beginning teachers to state a preference for their first appointment is questionable. A clue to this is their response to the question, "Was information readily available about the school(s) you thought you might be interested in?" Seventy-one percent of all respondents answered "no" to this. This is in spite of the claims made by employing authorities that they prepare and provide information about their schools.

For some beginning teachers the lack of readily available information is compensated to some extent by a visit to the school before the first term starts, (see Table 5 and Figure 1). In 1977, sixty-nine percent of beginning teachers made these visits, half of which were initiated by the

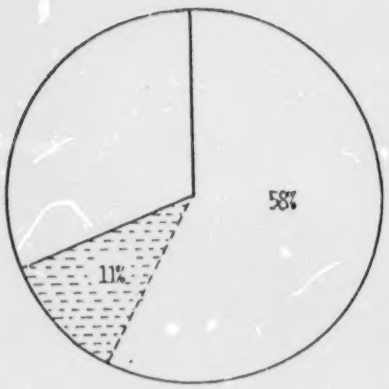


FIGURE 1. Prior Visits to School

(Percentage of Teachers)

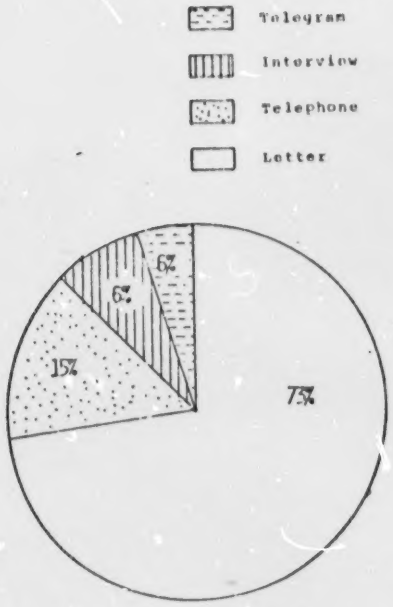


FIGURE 2. Method of Notification of Appointment

(Percentage of Teachers)

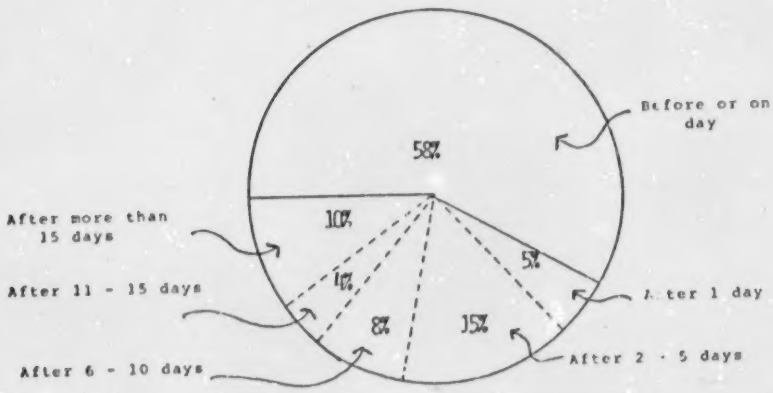


FIGURE 3. Delay in Allocation of Work Load

(Percentage of Teachers)

teachers themselves. For the remainder the initiative and organisation came from the system authority or the school itself. The number of new appointees who were able to visit their schools beforehand is perhaps surprising in the light of the delays in their receiving formal confirmation of appointments. Forty-five percent received this confirmation in the three weeks immediately before the beginning of the school term. Only thirty-five percent had more than six weeks' notice. As Figure 2 shows the offer of appointment usually came by mail. One in seven were advised by telephone.

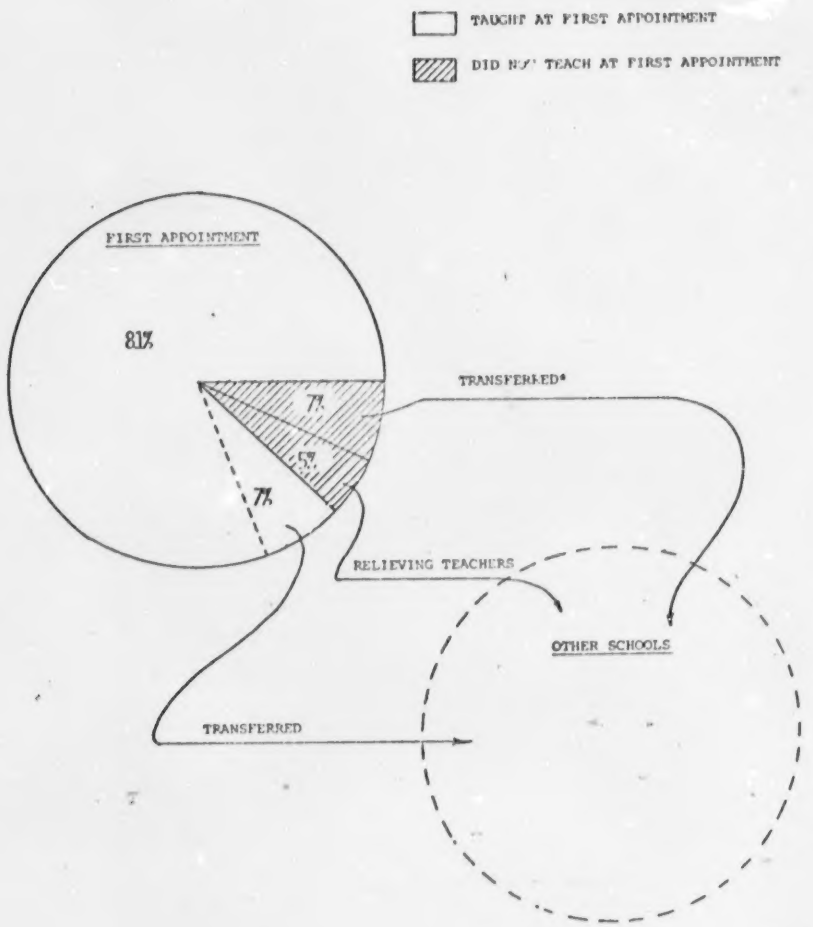
On the basis of the foregoing information alone it is difficult to maintain that beginning teachers are afforded an easy entry into their employment. For some there are further circumstances that might lead to frustration before they begin the important business of teaching. Although most (87%) are briefed on the first day (albeit alone with other staff, see Table 5), there can be lengthy delays before they actually have a clear specification of their teaching duties (see Figure 3). Fifty-seven percent had their work load defined on or before the first day of teaching, but among those who had to wait a noteworthy ten percent did not receive an allocation until three weeks or longer after the beginning of term.

Some teachers (almost one in five) were transferred within a few months from the school of their first appointment, and some (12%) did not even get to teach there. Figure 4 illustrates this mobility amongst first year teachers.

Much of the organisation of the teaching programme in a school has to take place before new staff take up their appointments. With this in mind about two-thirds of respondents felt they were fairly treated in the degree to which they were consulted over the allocation of responsibilities, viz. class level(s), teaching subject(s), teaching load and other duties. The details with respect to assigned class levels are given as an example in Figure 5. What should be noted is that although some beginning teachers who were not consulted considered they were fairly treated, nevertheless there is a very significant relation between being consulted and the feeling of being fairly treated.

Respondents were approximately evenly divided into those who did and those who did not receive help with their teaching during the first week (see Figure 6). Three quarters of those not receiving help were not worried by this, the other quarter were.

The questionnaire responses have something to tell about professional activities organised especially for new staff. A minority (42%) experienced them, and only a minority of these (44%) considered they gain much of value from them. Figure 7 shows the timing of the activities. As the interview protocols later revealed, among the activities most valued by beginning



* THE PROPORTION OF SECONDARY TEACHERS IS APPROX. 6 : 4

FIGURE 4.

EARLY TRANSFERS OF BEGINNING TEACHERS IN AUSTRALIA

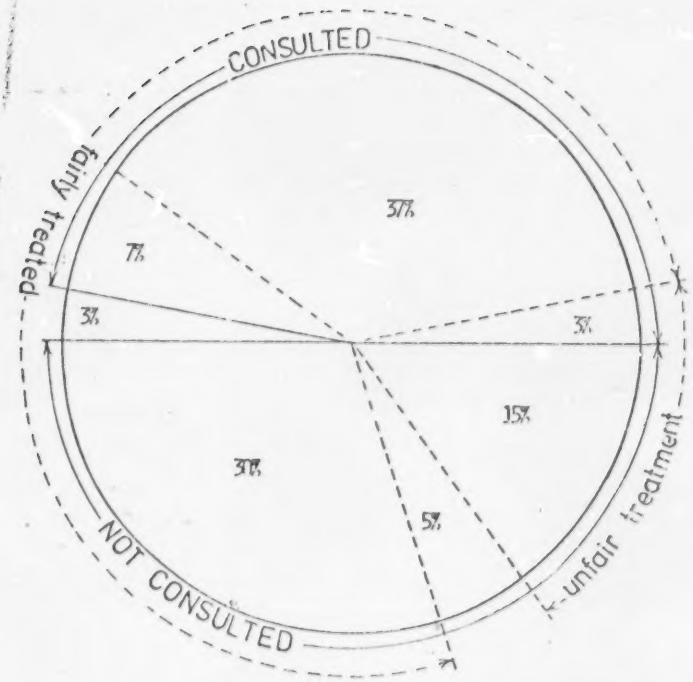


FIGURE 5

CONSULTATION AND FAIR TREATMENT OVER THE ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

(ASSIGNED CLASS LEVELS)

(PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS)

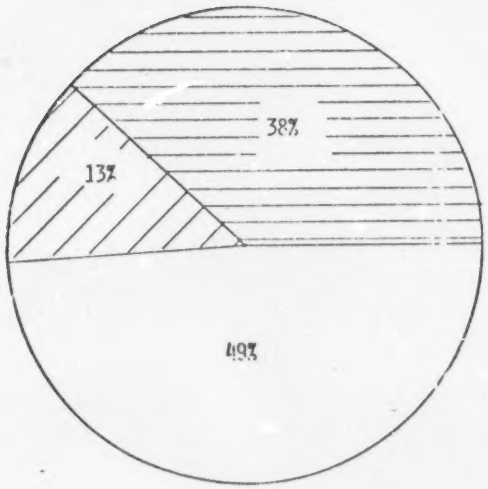


FIGURE 6

HELP RECEIVED WITH TEACHING: FIRST WEEK

(PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS)

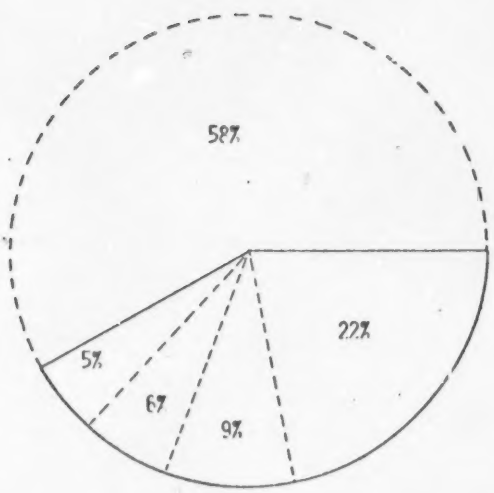


FIGURE 7

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR NEW STAFF

(PERCENTAGE OF TEACHERS)

teachers were regular consultations with trusted and respected peers.

(c) Competence and Concern - an early view.

Many of the data from this questionnaire were gathered for comparison with those from the survey late in 1977 so that changes in new teachers' perceptions about their jobs and the extent of their problems could be identified. With just the first set of data analysed only their early feelings can be outlined.

Although the data indicate that eighty percent of new teachers are generally satisfied with their jobs they also show that rather fewer (61%) feel fully accepted as members of the school team with their own contribution to make. Table 6 gives more detailed information of this last point.

TABLE 6

Beginning Teachers' Perceptions

of

Their Acceptance by Others

(Percentages)

(N = 14640)

Level of Acceptance	School level		
	Primary	Post-Primary & Other	
Undecided	2.8	2.8	5.6
Not accepted	1.5	1.4	2.9
Partially	14.1	15.5	29.6
Fully	32.7	29.2	61.9
	51.1	48.9	100.0

Clearly many beginning teachers have accepted jobs which differ in one or more respects to the job they would have preferred. On each of the following - school location, social background, size, atmosphere and allocation of teaching subjects and levels - one in five of the teachers indicate a dissimilarity between their actual appointment and their preferred job.

While adjusting to the realities of the situation in which they find themselves, they also have a great amount to learn about their school and job. They cope with varying degrees of success. For the majority the information they need is readily available. However about sixteen percent

TABLE 7

Availability of Information

(Percentages of Beginning Teachers)

(N = 14,640)

I Information regarding	II Readily Obtainable	III Source of Worry	Overlap between Columns II & III
1. Equipment available	71.4	40.2	16.3
2. School curriculum	72.9	35.4	16.2
3. School administration procedures	75.6	35.2	16.7
4. Teaching methods favoured by school	58.8	33.1	13.7
5. Conditions of employment	74.5	27.8	10.6
6. School rules	81.5	26.8	14.1
7. Specialist services available	65.2	25.8	8.3

TABLE 8

Percentage of Beginning Teachers Coping and Worrying

(N = 14,640)

I Teaching Task	II Those Coping	III Those Worrying	Overlap between Columns II & III
1. Teaching groups with wide ability range	59.1	72.0	34.2
2. Teaching slow learners	56.5	68.8	28.6
3. Evaluating own teaching	66.0	60.0	29.1
4. Discovering level at which to teach	71.9	58.4	33.0
5. Motivating pupils	70.5	57.8	30.9
6. Teaching specific skills (e.g. reading)	69.2	51.9	24.7
7. Devising schmes of work	85.4	48.9	35.1
8. Controlling classes	82.2	47.3	31.2
9. Teaching immigrants	64.7	46.0	19.7
10. Assessing pupils'work	80.4	45.7	28.0

of those beginning teachers receiving information worry about the availability of equipment, the school curriculum, the school administrative practices and its favoured teaching methods. In addition another twenty or twenty-five percent do not find information readily available on these four matters. Table 7 lists, in rank order, the seven items causing the most worry.

Some teaching tasks that appear to be managed quite adequately can nevertheless emerge as a source of worry. Table 8 shows, for example, that one in three beginning teachers worry about discovering the appropriate teaching level even though they consider they are coping. This concern might be anticipated from the earlier remarks on lack of consultation about their teaching duties and the injustice of this.

"Worry" by itself is probably counter-productive but "worry" alongside "coping adequately" may be simply expressing a wish to do better and the significant incidence of this might well be one of the more encouraging outcomes of the survey. A genuine concern on the part of some beginning teachers to teach with greater confidence and more spontaneity was an impression also gained from the mid-year interviews. If this is the case the need for more personalised support from within the school is implied.

Table 8 also shows that for more than two out of three of the nation's new teachers the tasks of teaching groups with wide ability ranges and teaching slow learners are a source of worry. Contrary to the often expressed view that new teachers do not manage their classes nor are they able to assess pupils' progress over eighty percent of the beginning teachers claim that they are coping reasonably.

Both primary and post-primary teachers include all 17 items of Tables 7 and 8 among those causing greatest concern. However a smaller proportion of primary teachers, but still more than a third (see Table 9), worry about motivation and control. On the other hand, teaching specific skills, e.g. reading, causes worry for a greater proportion of primary than post-primary teachers. In other respects their patterns of responses are similar.

6. Discussion and concluding comments

This paper tells but a small yet significant part about the induction of Australia's beginning teachers. A number of the research questions have been answered - do beginning teachers receive help? what procedures are used to induct them? what are their worries? do they cope? do they feel accepted? - but others have not. For example, there is still much to be studied about the relationships between different patterns of entry to employment, school, local community and classroom and the different concerns, expectations and

TABLE 9

Teaching Tasks

Percentage of Primary Teachers Coping and Worrying

I	II Those Coping	III Those Worrying	Overlap between Columns II & III
1. Teaching groups with wide ability range.	63.0	69.0	35.6
2. Teaching slow learners	60.0	66.5	29.6
3. Teaching specific skills (e.g. reading)	69.1	60.8	31.5
4. Discovering level at which to teach.	72.2	56.3	31.4
5. Evaluating own teaching.	66.5	56.1	26.1
6. Devising scheme of work.	82.9	47.8	31.5
7. Teaching immigrants.	65.5	47.2	21.2
8. Assessing pupils' work.	78.6	45.1	27.1
9. Motivating pupils.	80.7	43.9	26.2
10. Controlling classes.	86.9	36.4	25.3

satisfactions of beginning teachers early and also later in their first year of teaching. Also, information from their first questionnaire has yet to be compared with the relevant sections of the questionnaire to principals. Only then can the full story be told.

In the meantime the analyses we have reported present an interesting picture which is appealing to some and not to others. Depending on your point of view the findings can be interpreted differently. On the one hand, when it is accepted that the various state government and territory education authorities have a mammoth task to place all their new teachers it may be regarded as gratifying that slightly more than half of them received formal confirmation of appointment more than three weeks in advance and only 40 percent have to wait till the three weeks immediately before the first school term. It may also be considered a notable achievement that 69 percent were able to visit their school before they entered on duty. The employing authorities and the senior staff in the schools can, no doubt, take credit that the majority of new teachers are satisfied with their present appointment, consider they are coping with most teaching tasks, believe they are fully accepted within their school, receive details of their work before the end of the first week

of school, consider they have been fairly treated with respect to their allocation of duties, and believe that various aspects of their job match what they prefer. Furthermore, busy principals and experienced staff can feel pleased that about half of the new teachers receive help with their teaching during the first week and a slightly smaller proportion have professional activities especially designed for them. It is also encouraging to note that a small (19%) but significant number have had travel or other work experiences before entering teaching and that the majority do not criticise the quality of their pre-service practice teaching.

On the other hand, the findings may be taken to show that all is not well with the nation's new teachers and that employing authorities and senior school staff are failing to provide a high standard of induction into the profession for every beginning teacher. It may be considered an indictment that over three quarters of the new teachers did not know where to receive information about the schools for which they applied, about one quarter did not obtain information on many school procedures once they took up duty, one in every seven had to mark time for two school weeks or more before they received their work allocation, one in every two were not consulted with respect to this allocation, less than one third of them had regular professional activities especially designed for them, 50 percent received no help with respect to their teaching in their first week, of the 40 percent who attended some type of professional activity for them less than half regarded it as useful, over one third felt not fully accepted in their schools and one in every five did not get a chance to stay longer than a few months at their first appointment. The fact that so many new teachers are not accepted as worthwhile colleagues is not entirely their fault. Some of the interview protocols show that they are treated as second class citizens by some more experienced staff who assign them to unwanted or difficult classes, or tell them they will be bad teachers in their first few years.

Singly these facts may be of minor concern, but together they indicate that there is often a disconcerting incongruity between pre-service teacher preparation and the 'real thing'. It is the central purpose of the research project discussed in this paper to examine the nature of the uncertainties that confront some beginning teachers and the kinds of assistance available to help them resolve these. Already it is clear, with still much of the data yet to be analysed, that the survey methods adopted are serving this purpose well. The methods are time-consuming but, if as a consequence experienced teachers and others can be challenged to promote a more encouraging climate into which young teachers can move confidently and creatively, then the research undertaking will in the long run have been worthwhile.

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